

Message Text

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P - MR. FORBES

EA/EP - MR. GEBER

HA - MR. CUSHING (SUBS)

-----007005 180023Z /63

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 125951

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, MY

SUBJECT: US-MALAYSIAN RELATIONS: CALL BY AMBASSADOR ZAIN

1. ON MAY 16, MALAYSIAN AMBASSADOR ZAIN PAID INITIAL COURTESY CALL ON UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM. MAIN TOPICS WERE US-MALAYSIAN RELATIONS, INDOCHINESE REFUGEES, AND THE UPCOMING US-ASEAN CONFERENCE.

US-MALAYSIAN RELATIONS. UNDERSECRETARY NEWSOM OBSERVED THAT WITH THE VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT AND THE GROWING IMPORTANCE OF THE REGION, OLD IMAGES REGARDING SOUTHEAST ASIA ARE BEING SET ASIDE. AMBASSADOR ZAIN STATED THERE HAD BEEN A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS IN MALAYSIAN ATTITUDES TOWARD THE U.S. FOR THE RANKING MALAYSIAN LEADERSHIP AS WELL AS STUDENTS THE U.S. WAS A "NEWLY DISCOVERED AREA". HE OBSERVED THAT THERE HAVE BEEN MORE RANKING MALAYSIAN VISITORS TO THE U.S. DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS THAN IN THE PREVIOUS TWENTY.

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INDOCHINESE REFUGEES. THE UNDER SECRETARY NOTED THAT THE VICE PRESIDENT HAS EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE CONCERN RE THE PLIGHT OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES AND THAT THE US WELCOMES PM HUSSEIN'S POSITION REGARDING THEIR TEMPORARY ACCEPTANCE KNOWING THAT IT IS DIFFICULT FOR THE GOM TO DO SO.

AMBASSADOR ZAIN STATED THAT THE GOM HAD FOLLOWED CLOSELY DEPARTMENTAL TESTIMONY BEFORE THE CONGRESS WHICH EMPHASIZED THE NEED TO MOVE REFUGEES RAPIDLY. THE UNDER SECRETARY COMMENTED THAT THE ATTORNEY GENERAL HAD INFORMED CONGRESS OF HIS AGREEMENT WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE THAT 25,000 INDOCHINESE REFUGEES SHOULD BE ADMITTED OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS. THE DEPARTMENT HOPES THIS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED SOON. NOTING THAT THE FLOW OF REFUGEES EVIDENTLY WILL NOT SOON DIMINISH AND IS INCREASING, ZAIN REPLIED THAT THE SRV APPARENTLY WAS TURNING A BLIND EYE TO THE OUTFLOW.

US-ASEAN MEETING. THE UNDER SECRETARY NOTED THE US HAD EMPHASIZED THE DESIRABILITY OF HAVING THE COMING US-ASEAN DIALOGUE HELD AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL TO WHICH ZAIN OBSERVED THAT HE BELIEVED A DECISION FAVORABLE TO SUCH A VIEW WOULD SOON BE FORTHCOMING. VANCE

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